

for half a century has dedicated himself to the 4-H program and the youth of the county. It was in fact 1948 when Melvin became president of the Gogebic County 4-H Council. From this leadership position, he would help the local 4-H launch a variety of valuable programs.

First, he played a major role in the establishment of the Gogebic Extension Camp at Little Girl's Point, which opened in 1950. He served as a leader in the establishment and operation of the 4-H Ski Hill on the George Mussatti farm in Bessemer. The ski hill opened in 1951 and was open every weekend through the early 1980's.

Melvin helped promote and organize many "Annual 4-H Winter Sports Days," and in his 18 years on the Gogebic County Fair Board he actively promoted many county fair activities, including coordinating the 4-H Parade.

Maybe most importantly in his 4-H work, Melvin has served as a positive and encouraging friend to the children involved with the Gogebic County 4-H program. I have it on good faith from a member of my own staff, a 4-Her from northern Michigan, that "Melly," as he was known, never failed to offer a warm, welcoming smile, a constant and an eagerly expected treat for those youth attending 4-H Camp or exhibiting their projects at the Gogebic County Fair.

Mr. Speaker, we know the face of this giving volunteer was bound to show up in other venues, as is the case with true volunteers, so it should be no surprise to learn Melvin also served as a Gogebic County Commissioner for 22 years. For the same amount of time he served on the Western U.P. Planning and Development Regional Commission and with the Gogebic-Ontonagon Community Action Agency.

Melvin was a member of the Gogebic County Airport Board for six years, a member of the UPCAP Executive Committee for 11 years, and he served on the Western U.P. District Health Board for 18 years. He was a liaison to the Michigan Townships Association for eight years. Melvin was active in dairy farm professional associations, and in other professionally-related efforts he was a part of the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service for 30 years.

Repeated terms on the local Lutheran Church board and service as a Little League Counselor round out the valuable contributions made to the area families and the community.

It's no wonder that Mr. Jacobson was nominated for Governor George Romney Lifetime Achievement Community Service Award. Michigan's former governor served as an inspiration for volunteerism in the state before he became a national inspiration for last year's gathering in Philadelphia.

On May 30, 1998, V. Melvin Jacobson will be honored by friends and family at a 4-H Appreciation Banquet. I ask all my colleagues to join me in celebrating this lifetime of service to all the people of the western Upper Peninsula of Michigan, and to offer thanks on behalf of all those, children and adults, whose lives were enriched by this service.

## MY VOICE IN OUR DEMOCRACY

**HON. JOHN E. SUNUNU**

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, May 22, 1998*

Mr. SUNUNU. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to Ashley Allyn, 16, of New Durham, New Hampshire. As a national winner of 1997-98 Veterans of Foreign Wars and Ladies Auxiliary "Voice of Democracy" broadcast script writing contest, Ashley concisely captures the importance of America's most basic freedoms in her well-written entry.

I hereby submit Ashley's work for publication in the Congressional Record and congratulate her for her thoughtful piece entitled "My Voice in our Democracy." Her words serve as a thoughtful reminder to all Americans that in a Democracy each voice does matter

[1997-1998 VFW Voice of Democracy Scholarship Competition]

MY VOICE IN OUR DEMOCRACY

(By Ashley Allyn)

"The doctor will see you now." That's something you might expect to hear if you've lost your voice. That is "voice"—defined in the dictionary as "sound made through the mouth, especially by human beings, as in talking, singing, etc."

But there is another sort of voice we need to be concerned about. Consulting the dictionary again, we find quite "the right to express one's wish, choice, opinion, or to make it prevail; as in, having a 'voice' in our government." We have all seen enough newspaper and television accounts of the tragic consequences in counties where the people have lost their voice.

My voice in our democracy started before I could even actually speak. Ours is a country with civil rights for all—no matter how young. I was protected by laws from the very beginning of my life. As I grew older, I was able to function within our democracy on a smaller scale—within my family, my peer group, and my school.

When I turn 18, my voice will grow louder, because I will be able to vote. But what about now? Under our Constitution, my rights as a citizen are protected. One of the most satisfying things about living in a democracy is knowing that I do have a voice. I have the right to free speech, the right to publish my feelings, the right to write my Congressmen, and the right to organize a group. Even children in elementary school have made their voices heard by launching a campaign addressing a concern. Anyone can make their voice heard by the leaders of this country—they must have to speak up. I can do it, too. With supporters behind any cause I choose, my voice will be heard in Washington.

Ha, you think. Congressmen don't listen. They're corrupt, they're not even real to me. Think again. Given an unusual chance most people could only dream about, I was able to meet our nation's senators, to work with them face to face, and get to know their personal quirks and mannerisms. I realized that they are just people like you and me. They're everyday people—but they're people who had the drive, the initiative, and the concern for their country to try to fix its problems. After that opportunity, I saw how important and valuable anyone's voice is and I realized that I wanted my voice to be heard.

Oh, I won't necessarily change the world at this stage of the game, but the knowledge that, in the very near future, that could be a

real possibility is something that will direct my educational goals and my extracurricular activities.

As a high school student, there are many opportunities for me to voice my opinion. I can debate issues in class. I can attend government related activities such as Model Congress and Youth in Government, and I can campaign for political candidates. By showing my support for a candidate, whether it be at the town or national level, I am telling my neighbors, my community, and my country that I care about what laws are passed and which programs are funded. I can petition my school board if I feel a change needs to be made in my school. I can write my state senator about a problem that I feel needs to be addressed in my state. There are countless ways a teenager can tell the rest of the world that they notice, observe, and strive to change their own little corner. And as my corner grows, so do the changes I can make. And as my voice grows, so do the others behind it.

My voice will continue to be heard, at different levels, as my school years and community involvements continues. But in a democracy, it is reassuring to know that it will never be along. Others may be making different points, and even opposing points, but they will all be heard. And that, of course, is our fundamental strength—that here in America we will always have a chorus of voices.

## TRIBUTE TO MATTHEW KENNEDY

**HON. JOHN E. PETERSON**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, May 22, 1998*

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the accomplishments of Matthew Kennedy who won a scholarship in the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States and its Ladies Auxiliary Voice of Democracy broadcast script writing contest. Matthew is the son of Glenn and Shirley Kennedy who are serving as missionaries in Taichung, Taiwan and was sponsored by VFW Post 727. As the Pacific Areas winner, he is the recipient of a \$1,500 Silver Spring Memorial Post 2562 Scholarship Award. Competing with over 93,000 students, sixteen year old Matthew won one of the 54 national scholarships with his speech "My Voice in Our Democracy." I would like to insert his speech into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

My voice in our democracy is as powerful as a sweeping tide, as far-reaching as thought, and as valuable as the wisdom of Solomon. Its power is recognized and protected by our Constitution, its potent influence is proven by our nation's history and by current events; its value makes it my duty to steward it carefully.

Did the Founding Fathers believe the voice of a single citizen holds power? Absolutely. They established the freedoms of religion, speech, press, assembly, and petition. They wove into our democracy the great principles of popular sovereignty, limited government, representative government, and majority rule balanced by minority rights. They enshrined the fundamental worth of each individual's voice and the equality of all voices. To the minds of the Founding Fathers, even these freedoms and rights were not enough; they established the Ninth Amendment which recognized other unenumerated rights of the people. Is my voice really so powerful as to be precious? The Framers of our nation